

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

For the Meeting Held On February 24, 2015

Meeting Time : 6:10 pm

Location : Council on Aging Conference Room – 328 N. Main St. East Longmeadow, MA

Meeting Posted On: **Day:** Wednesday **Date:** 2 / 18 / 2015
(48 hrs required)

Is Meeting Being Recorded by Digital Recorder: Yes X No _____
The Minutes of this Meeting are being taken by: Marge Larocca

Committee Members: (check if attended)

Eric Madison	✓	Russell Denver	✓	James Broderick	✓	James Walsh	
Dawn Starks	✓	Rocco Carabetta	✓	Sam Pizzanelli	✓	Sara Menard	✓

Attendees: Billy Gorman, Gordon Smith, William Fonseca, Terry Olejarz, Richard Freccero, Deirdre Mailloux, Elizabeth Marsian-Boucher, Gregory Thompson, Chief Douglas Mellis, Pennie Tremblay, Marge Larocca

Did the Chair release any prior Executive Session Minutes?

Yes		No	x
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Dates of Executive Session Released :

TOPIC / MATTER #1

Budget Review – School Department

Summary of Matter Discussed :

- The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the School Committee to the meeting. He stated that he wanted to start the meeting with an overview of the information that he talked about the previous week at the Board of Selectmen's meeting.
- The Chairman stated that conversations he had with state representatives, they indicated that they are anticipating level funding of Chapter 70 and Local Aid. He added that the Governor doesn't want to cut the funding but doesn't anticipate any increase or decrease. He added that this information is in line with the Appropriations Committee's FY16 budget assumptions.
- The Chairman spoke about the current tax rate, and taxing to the max levy allowed by law. He said that the amount will be \$21.66 and this amount is bringing the rate closer to the \$25.00 cap. He added that it is inclusive of any override and exclusive of debt exclusions. The Chairman said that the committee doesn't want the tax rate to increase and wants to include the School Committee in that effort. The Chairman followed with a description of approaching the Board of Selectmen to request that they look into cost savings measures to increase revenue and also long term fiscal health. He added that he would like to open conversation with the School Committee pertaining to looking into cost savings measures such as outsourcing of busing and food service.
- School Superintendent Smith distributed a revised School Department budget and followed with an explanation. The Chairman voiced the concern of the Appropriations Committee being that step increases create a growing budget that is higher than can be sustained.
- Superintendent Smith explained the changes from the prior year's budget, and Mr. Freccero explained that the information on the budget second page was presented based on needs. Mr. Broderick expressed that Appropriations Committee guidelines

were not followed with the budget presented. Discussion followed about the information that should be included with the budget and the information for supplemental budgets. Full day kindergarten and Chapter 70 aid were also discussed. It was determined that the School Department will resubmit a budget with Appropriations Committee guidelines and also a second budget to include the tentative teachers' contract agreement amounts.

Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:

- School Department FY16 budget request

Votes Taken Under this Matter :

- None

TOPIC / MATTER #2

Budget Review – Police Department

Summary of Matter Discussed :

- The Chairman welcomed the Police Chief and Ms. Tremblay to the meeting. Ms. Tremblay distributed an updated FY16 Police Department budget and followed with an explanation of the changes that were made. Mr. Denver stated that he is the liaison for the Police Dept. He spoke about a conversation he had with the Chief about new things that bring value to the department, and about changes over the last 5 years.
- The Police Chief followed with an explanation of the increased level and types of events the department has had to deal with. Discussion followed about officer training, education and staffing levels of the department.
- A motion was made to accept the FY16 Police budget, excluding the supplemental budget. The motion was seconded, and all were in favor.

Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:

- Police Department FY16 Budget request

Votes Taken Under this Matter :

- A motion was made to accept the FY16 Police budget, excluding the supplemental budget. The motion was seconded, and all were in favor

TOPIC / MATTER #3

General Discussion

Summary of Matter Discussed :

- Discussion began about the IT Department's FY16 budget. The Chairman spoke about that the IT Director had sent regarding cell phones. It was determined that the committee members would review the budget again before a vote of approval is made.
- Mr. Broderick informed the committee about a possible reserve fund transfer request from the DPW related to waste disposal.
- The Chairman spoke about receiving a memo from the Assessor's Department regarding increases to the Senior Work-off Abatement Program and noted that there was not action needed from the committee at this time.
- Discussion began about the Recreation Department submitted budget. The Chairman stated that the base budget is in-line with the prior year's budget. A motion was made to accept the Recreation Department's base budget excluding the supplemental budget. The motion was seconded. The vote is as follows: James Broderick-no, Russ Denver-abstain, Dawn Starks-yes, Eric Madison-yes, Rocco Carabetta-yes.
- Mr. Carabetta gave an update of the Capital Planning Committee's projects and distributed a list of projects & categories for FY16.

Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:

- FY2016 Capital Projects & Categories

Votes Taken Under this Matter :

- A motion was made to accept the Recreation Department's base budget excluding the supplemental budget. The motion was seconded. The vote is as follows: James Broderick-no, Russ Denver-abstain, Dawn Starks-yes, Eric Madison-yes, Rocco Carabetta-yes.

8:59 PM: Motion to Adjourn

Next Meeting: March 3, 2015 – 6:30PM – Council on Aging – Conference Room

MEETING FOLLOW UP:
PRIOR MEETING NOTES:
Average cash balances – where are they at?
Note: Set date for Auditor's budget forum
Committee Goals :
Health Insurance Plan Designs
Health Insurance for part-time Elected Officials
Meal Tax generation
Professional Development Class
Increase OPEB Appropriation
Establish a Capital Planning Budget